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Inter-American Committee on Adult Education.

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When the North American Conference on Adult Education met in Mexico in June 1968, with delegates from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, a gentleman's agreement was made to carry out the purposes of the group on an individual basis, as well as within the group, seeking practical steps for developing adult education throughout all the Americas. The representatives of the North American Conference changed the committee name to the Inter-American Committee on Adult Education, with headquarters for the next three years in Canada. The purposes of the new committee were agreed to include the voluntary exchange of information and of people concerned with continuing education in North and South America, the establishment of a mechanism to facilitate such exchange, the stimulation of occasional conferences on highly specialized aspects of continuing education, and advisory services for members. Association with other organizations such as UNESCO and OAS is under consideration. The next meeting of the Inter-American Committee will be held in Washington, in the winter or early spring of 1968/69. (jf)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ADULT EDUCATION

(INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ADULT EDUCATION)

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MEXICO MEETING - JUNE 3, 4, 1968

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NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ADULT EDUCATION

(INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ADULT EDUCATION)

Meeting: June 3rd and 4th 1968,
Mexico, Mexico.

PRESENT: Senor Manuel Bravo J., Direccion General del Centro Nacional de Productividad - Banco de Mexico, Mexico. - Prof. Ramon Bonfil, Director General de Alfabetizacion y Educacion Extraescolar, Mexico. - Prof. Lucas Ortiz Benitez, Mexico. - Prof. Jesus Isaïs Reyes, Mexico. - Dr. Edward Warner Brice, Director Adult Education Branch - U.S. Office of Education, U.S.A. - Dr. Eugene I. Johnson, Executive Director - Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. - Mr.Robert A. Luke, Executive Secretary - NAPSEA, U.S.A. - Dr. William C. Huffman, Dean - University of Louisville, U.S.A. - M. Gérard Barbin, Directeur général - L'Institut Coopératif Desjardins, Canada.- Mr. Don MacNeill, (replacing Dr. Alan Thomas) - Canadian Association for Adult Education, Canada. - Miss Yseult Demers, Executive Secretary - North American Conference on Adult Education.

Observer: Dr. W.L. Schroeder, - Committee of Professors of Adult Education, U.S.A.

REGRETS: Mlle Madeleine Joubert, Directeur général - Institut Canadien d'Education des Adultes, Canada. - Mr. Gordon R. Selman, Director Extension Department - University of British Columbia, Canada. - Dr. Alan M. Thomas, Director - Canadian Association for Adult Education, Canada.

JUNE 3rd 1968

- Inaugural Session

The meeting was opened by a welcome speech by Senor Manuel Bravo, in which he expressed great appreciation for the initiatives taken by Canada with respect to the North American Conference, which led up to the Montreal meeting. He mentioned that

growing out of the Montreal experience, Mexico was gradually developing a stronger policy toward adult education. He mentioned a confidential report, at the present time in the hands of the Minister of Education, in which adult education was featured. He concluded by expressing the hope that the Agenda for this meeting would be totally discussed and, secondly, that the participants would feel so much at ease in the Mexican setting that they would desire to return again and again.

Dr. Eugene Johnson introduced the four members of the United States delegation; Dr. Edward W. Brice, Mr. Robert Luke, Mr. William C. Huffman and himself. He also introduced Dr. William Schroeder of the Committee of Professors of Adult Education who served as an observer.

Professor Ramon Bonfil introduced the four members of the Mexican delegation: Senor Manuel Bravo, Professors Lucas Ortiz Benitez, Jesus Isais Reyes and himself.

Mr. Don MacNeill expressed the regrets of Dr. Alan M. Thomas for his not being able to attend inasmuch as he had just returned from Africa and was obliged to assist at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. He also mentioned that Mr. Gordon Selman, the other delegate from English-speaking Canada, was unable to attend.

M. Gérard Barbin presented an apology from Mlle Madeleine Joubert who was taken ill on the eve of the reunion and was unable to attend. He also stated that M. Fernand Jolicoeur was, at last report, in Europe and expected to proceed directly to Mexico City but nothing had been heard from him. The Canadian delegation consisted of M. Barbin and Mr. MacNeill, replacing Dr. Thomas. Miss Yseult Demers, executive secretary of the North American Conference, was also present.

The Agenda for the meeting was adopted as presented.

It was felt that the nomination of a Chairman for the Committee would be postponed until near the end of the sessions. Senor Bravo was unanimously elected as Chairman pro tem. It was mentioned then that the Report of the Montreal Conference had been issued in March in French. The first copies of the English Report were presented to delegates at this meeting. The transcription of Minutes in Spanish would be undertaken by the Mexican delegation. Then, Mr. MacNeill read out the resolutions adopted at the Montreal Conference.

DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOW-UP ON THE MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE

In keeping with the resolution on the OAS (Organization of American States), professor Bonfil mentioned that there had been no contact with the OAS since the Conference, inasmuch as they were waiting for the Minutes to appear. He strongly felt that the Conference should co-operate with the OAS and the representatives of other Latin American countries. He recommended the designation of a representative to establish contact with the OAS.

Senor Bravo announced that within the past year, the OAS has carried out significant activities in the fields of technology, development and culture. It was suggested that it would be advisable to make a full study of the OAS agreements on education in the Latin American countries. Dr. Brice stated that the OAS's actions impinged on our own. They have taken a strong stand on adult education in the Americas and, in addition, the OAS has funds and an established program. He suggested that a small committee of three members be appointed to approach the OAS.

Further discussion was tabled until the next day when the documents of the OAS could be made available, (this was impossible and Senor Bravo said that he would send these by mail as soon as he could).

OFFICIAL DELEGATES

As decided at the last meeting of the Montreal Conference, the members of the planning committee had taken the necessary steps to nominate the four delegates from each country. The result is as follow:

MEXIQUE:	Senor Manuel Bravo J.
	Prof. Ramon Bonfil
	Prof. Lucas Ortiz Benitez
	Prof. Jesus Isaïs Reyes
U.S.A.:	Dr. Edward W. Brice
	M. Robert A. Luke
	Dr. Eugene I. Johnson
	Dr. William C. Huffman
CANADA:	Mlle Madeleine Joubert
	M. Gérard Barbin
	M. Gordon Selman
	Dr. Alan Thomas

NAMING OF THE NEW COMMITTEE

Following general discussion on the name of the new committee, it was decided to wait until the discussion of objectives and the scope of the committee could be determined. It was felt that the objectives would differ if the delegates place emphasis on North America only.

Senor Bravo mentioned that questions on adult education are especially important in Latin America in terms of long-range strategy. The question came as to how we could invite other countries to participate. It was decided that a free discussion should be made on this point at the second session.

Dr. Brice noted that we have undergone an evolution of ideas within the few months after the Montreal Conference where we felt we had to plan within the capabilities of three countries alone. He posed the question as to whether the idea of North America was a viable concept on which the objectives of such a committee could be based.

Senor Bonfil felt that we must update the ideas and aims of Montreal in the light of a continuing evolution of thought of the delegates and also in the light of developments in adult education considered by the OAS and the Council of Ministers of American countries. Inasmuch as Dr. Thomas was not there, the attempt was made to re-state his original expression of the "idea of North America". It was stated that Dr. Thomas would be the last one to question the evolution and change in the original concept.

Professor Bonfil expressed his concern for the development of Latin American countries and the urgency to develop adult education in Latin America. This committee should seek practical steps for the promotion of the idea of adult education in both the more-developed and the less-developed countries. Up to the present time, he said, none of us has dared to provide a simple solution for the whole area. Now we must ask what can we do.

Dr. Johnson advocated a mechanism for all the Americas. However we cannot plan for all countries unless they are here at the meeting. As we, three countries, have established some measure of communication over the past year, so we should seek to:

1 - set up a mechanism in order to reach the whole continent;

2 - remain a group looking at specific programs and project within the context of adult education.

Professor Benitez stated that it was amazing that out of their own will the participating countries had come together to exchange and to put into practice their experiences. It still remains to analyze how far the resolutions have been carried out. However, that which was done by three countries might be done by others. Association with other agencies such as UNESCO, OAS, ... etc. should be considered.

Senor Bravo summarized the present situation as follows:

1 - The exchange of ideas and experiences was the purpose that brought the three countries together initially. We attempted to look upon adult education from a larger point of view. We were not representatives of countries, but individuals dedicated to broaden the purpose of adult education.

2 - We must think of this as an association for adult education, either of three countries of inter-American. We can have a committee of adult education comprised of the three beginning countries plus others, or we can establish an inter-American committee as is considered most desireable.

3 - Our function is to urge public action in adult education. The Conference proposed an informative process, an exchange of documents and ideas. It is interesting to note that what is proposed by the OAS is far greater than this. We meet for information and exchange, for discussions and advances.

4 - It is right for us to consider in what way we can concern ourselves as individuals. The moral influence of this group might be far greater if we were a broader mechanism. However, our purpose is to continue our concern in pin-pointing the need for adult education, to get together to discuss, and in this way, joining with other countries, we can truly establish what is the central element for each one of us.

5 - We must agree on our objectives and the necessity for periodic meetings to discuss these objectives. We must be ready to collaborate on an international basis.

e Afternoon

PURPOSE OF THE MEETINGS

There was some question as to the primary purpose of these meetings. It was felt that the purpose was not merely to hold another conference, but rather to facilitate communication with one another and to further the possibility of a series of activities such as exchange and information, holding of conferences, communication between the countries, ...etc. It was agreed that the general purposes of the committee are:

1 - to increase the flow of information in adult education between the three countries;

2 - to serve as a "Clearinghouse of Information" between countries: media, journals, ... etc. ;

3 - to exchange people involved in the field of adult education;

4 - to stimulate and encourage the holding of a conference on technical aspects of adult education. The committee would not sponsor the conference, but would rather encourage it.

5 - be a guardian body to ensure that international events would involve and be concerned with adult education.

It was pointed out by Professor Bonfil that in both the U.S. and Canada, there is a national body, a central organization which co-ordinates activities on adult education. The question was asked whether representation on the Committe should be through individual or a central office for adult education. Mexico does not have this type of a national body.

Mr. Luke expressed a caution about the global activities of the conference. He felt that the first three objectives were very difficult to attain. How can we increase the exchange of information when it is nearly impossible within one country? How much more difficult among many countries? He questioned whether it was possible for this group to have an impact on OAS, UNESCO, and the proposed conference of the Ministers of Education of the Americas? He felt that our function was to expand the concept of education to include continuing education in all of the countries and to strengthen adult education so that it would be interpreted as meaning social, cultural and economic development.

This would involve working towards the goal of greater public expense by Governments for the education of adults.

Senor Bravo summarized by saying that there was a general consensus of purposes, that the North American Conference has a potential for us in the field of adult education. It is a gentleman's agreement in the carrying out of certain objectives; to be aware of developments and it is up to us to ensure their realization and stimulation. No technical secretariat is possible for this intensely personal program of fertilizing the concept of adult education. Senor Bravo proposed to appoint a small committee that would set in writing a statement including: an historical account, the objectives and a planification of first steps to be taken. Dr. Brice, Senor Bonfil and Mr. MacNeill were charged with these functions.

FINANCIAL REPORT

It was moved to approve the accounts without the necessity of an audit. It was felt that all publication expenses should be charged to the Washington account as these accounts were designated specifically for publications. It was suggested that a committee be set up to find resources to continue to finance the new committee. It was recommended that Dr. Thomas and Mlle Joubert be authorized to sign cheques for the Montreal account.

SUB-COMMITTEE'S REPORT

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR THE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

For the past five years, a group of concerned Canadian, Mexican and United States adult educators have been exploring the question of increased co-operation and collaboration between our countries in encouraging and stimulating programs of continuing education for all citizens. These explorations have led to the recent North American Conference on Adult Education held in Montreal, in October 1967. This Conference reaffirmed our common desire to work together through all available means to improve and expand continuing education opportunities in the three countries. The Montreal Conference made the following declaration of principle:

> "We, the citizens of three countries inhabiting the Continent of North America, believe in the significance of continuous learning in the common endeavour to realize the power of all human values, although our traditions vary. We believe that these differences enrich each one of us and that this is the moment in time when we have the opportunity through our grasp of the power of learning to exemplify the results of independent interchange. As adult educators, we believe that we have the unique opportunity and responsibility to develop the special promise of Inter-American co-operation."

The Conference resolved that a continuing committee be organized to actively work toward the achievement of this declaration.

OBJECTIVES

Growing out of this expressed belief in the opportunities and responsibilities entrusted to us to develop the promise of Inter-American co-operation in the field of adult education, which is interpreted in the humanistic sense of continuing education, we would state our purposes as follows:

1 - The exploration and development of a voluntary exchange of information about opportunities and programs in continuing education in all of the countries of the Americas, beginning first with the three countries involved in the Montreal meeting;

2 - The establishment of a mechanism to facilitate such exchange of information and to bring to the attention of agencies, associations and governments, such programs related to continuing education as appear in the information media: press, television, radio, ...etc.;

3 - The facilitation of exchange travel and consultation of people involved in continuing education in the countries of the Americas for both short, and long term periods of time;

4 - The stimulation of occasional conferences on some of the more technical or specialized aspects of continuing education, such conferences which may be sponsored by other related agencies or groups but which will be enriched by the contribution of concerted study on continuing education themes;

5 - The availability to groups, organizations and agencies concerned with social, community and economic development of advisory services on the continuous education aspects of such programs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE'S PLAN OF ACTION

1 - The representatives of each country will make available to the remaining countries participating in the committee all those publications which refer to continuing education in general, and to aspects of adult education specifically which may be published in the country issuing the information.

2 - Each of the participating countries will make the broadest dissemination possible of the work and experiences of the other members of the Committee.

3 - A series of conferences, seminars and abbreviated courses will be encouraged in each of the participating countries in accordance with their needs

and resources endeavouring in each case to get the direct participation of the other member countries of the Committee.

4 - The Committee will establish contact, as soon as possible, with the OAS, UNESCO, ECLA and other international organizations for the implementation of its purposes.

5 - The Committee will keep all the countries of Latin America informed about its work.

MEANS RECOMMENDED TO FULFIL THESE OBJECTIVES:

a) that an Inter-American Committee on Adult Education be formed, composed of four members from each of the three countries. In the case of new members from other countries, provision shall be made for similar representation. The Committee shall meet at least once a year.

b) that a Chairman be appointed from the members of the Committee for a one-year term on a rotating basis among the countries: Canada, Mexico and the United States, and other countries as they become members.

c) the Committee will take special care in admitting as members those groups and institutions of recognized professional character and demonstrating a spirit of co-operation.

d) that a secretariat be appointed for a term of three-years, whose responsibility will include maintenance of an office, correspondence and exchange with members, implementation of such programs initiated by the Committee, and such other duties as assigned by the Committee. Adequate remuneration will be made for these services. The three working languages will be French, English and Spanish.

e) that a sub-committee be set up by the Committee to recommend and to seek adequate funding for the work of the Committee.

f) that each group will make its own contribution within its means and resources, both financially and in volunteer personnel, for the implementation of the programs authorized by the Committee.

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JUNE 4th 1968

STUDY OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S REPORT

After reading of the statement prepared by Messieurs Brice, Bonfil and MacNeill, the question was raised as to the use of the terms "adult education" or "continuing education". Although there is no misunderstanding among professionals, they do occasionally cause confusion. Senor Bravo mentioned that "adult education" usually includes the usefulness of the capabilities of an adult in society, whereas "continuing education" includes the humanistic side of the educational process. Professor Bonfil stated that he preferred to make use of the terms "continuous education" rather than "continuing education".

In taking up the first paragraph of the objectives, it is pointed out that the responsibility is based upon each country to facilitate the flow to the secretariat, and also to the other countries.

The second objective should be defined more clearly as to intent. Is it to utilize the media for the promotion of continuing education and to inform the public of its use; is it to enable the public to understand the media in a better way; or is it to encourage the media in each country to carry adult education projects of various countries?

As for the fifth objective, it is stated that the advisory function of the Committee is related to members and not "participating countries". The peculiar use of social, community and economic cevelopment relates to the general consensus that adult education participates in far more than purely adult education programs, but extends to many other areas.

After revising the Suggestions for Plan of Action, a considerable discussion was held on requirements of membership. Are we to accept anyone who wishes to join? Or should some statement of intent as to professional standards be inserted? It is advised that the Minutes of the present meeting be sent to all participants of the North American Conference on Adult Education which was held in Montreal.

MR. DAVID BARTLETT'S LETTER

Then reading is given of a letter from Mr. David Bartlett, general secretary for the Canadian National Commission for UNESCO, in which he draws the attention of the committee on two recommendations adopted by the National Commissions of UNESCO at their Jamaica meeting, last April. Two motions are then carried:

1 - to acknowledge receipt of this letter indicating the interest of the Committee in the proposed conference but also stating that there is no question of holding a conference ourselves in 1969.

2 - to explore the possibilities of sharing with UNESCO a regional conference.

PROCEDURE FOR CONSTITUTING THE NEW COMMITTEE

- Composition of the new committee

The persons already mentioned as representatives of their countries will be considered from now on as the Official Delegates on the new committee. Senor Bonfil's motion was seconded by Dr. Brice and unanimously adopted. Senor Bravo called for a special vote of gratitude for the initiative taken by Canada in the inception, continuation and motivation, in the great task of continuing and adult education. He expressed his own gratitude for persistance in the face of many difficulties,for communications and for ultimate fullfilment.

- Naming of the committee

Miscellaneous names were proposed: INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ADULT EDUCATION, INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION, MEXCANUS COMMITTEE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION. The name "INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON ADULT EDUCATION"moved by Dr. Brice, seconded by Mr. MacNeill is unanimously adopted.

- Appointment of the Chairman

As proposed by Senor Bravo, seconded by Mr. Luke it was unanimously adopted that Dr. Alan Thomas, Canadian delegate, be appointed chairman of the new committee, for a term of one year. The Chair recognized the effectiveness of Dr. Thomas's work as an initiator of Inter-American co-operation.

e Sub-Committee

It was voted that a sub-committee on Fund Raising should be made up of the National Chairmen of the various member groups: the following choice is unanimously adopted:

CANADA:	Mlle Madeleine Joubert
U.S.A.:	Dr. Eugene Johnson (Executive Director of AEA).
MEXICO:	Senor Manuel Bravo.

e Headquarters of the Inter-America Committee

By common consent, Canada was chosen as the site of the committee for three years. A secretary will be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Thomas and by the Chairman of Canadian Member groups, Mlle Madeleine Joubert.

The Chair paid special tribute to the work of Mlle Yseult Demers and through her to the rest of Canada for the work in handling the business of the Secretariat up to this point.

SITE FOR NEXT REUNION

M. Barbin proposed that the next meeting of the INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE be held in Washington, in the Winter or early Spring 1968/69. This motion seconded by Mr. Huffmann is unanimously adopted. The representatives of NAPSAE and AEA volunteered a contribution of two-thirds of the pooled expenses of the meeting; and Dr. Brice indicated that he could secure the remaining one-third.

FINANCES

It was voted that the remaining funds accruing to the credit of the North American Conference be transferred to the new Committee and properly audited, certified and receipted.

CLOSING OF THE MEETING

In the name of all the delegates, Mr. Johnson thanked Senor Bravo and his colleagues who contributed to a fine and efficient working conference. A special debt of gratitude was noted for the hearty hospitality of the Mexicans.

It was voted that an expression of thanks in writing be sent to the Canadian Embassy for its gracious invitation and its faithful co-operation.

The meeting is ajourned.

In collaboration:
Yseult Demers,
Don MacNeill.

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